

LINGUOCULTURAL AND LINGUOPRAGMATIC FEATURES OF ANECDOTES IN LITERARY TEXTS IN ENGLISH

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ANNOTATION:Linguoculturology and linguopragmatics are new and most commonly learned spheres of linguistics. Researching linguistics linguoculturologically shows that it demonstrates culture and linguistics. The article illustrates anecdote, its linguoculturologik and linguopragmatic features in discourse.

KEY WORDS:Linguoculturology, linguopragmatics, anecdote, verbal irony, literal irony, riddles, slender.

The article is a study of typical language means that take part in actualizing the text of an anecdote in the process of communication. It also substantiates functional specificity of an anecdote; its genre features as well as advances a generalized linguistic definition of the anecdote as a small form folk text. It is suggested that views the anecdote as a small entertaining didactic story with a witty ending based on the facts from life of historical figures or ordinary people. This story, being the product of comic collective reflection on a relevant social situation or a natural change in human values, reflects national, mental and human experience accumulated by the society in order to achieve an entertaining or criticizing effect. The hierarchical system of the functions of an anecdote is described in the paper by their following sequence: general didactic function → creative-and-teaching pragmatic orientation → entertaining-and-educational purpose. As a result of studying the specificity of lingual means' actualization in the text of an anecdote, the author summarizes typical characteristics of the genre of an anecdote as follows: conciseness, light-heartedness, folk origin, dialogical directionality, evaluative and argumentative nature, which consists in language play and sound play in the anecdote actualization. Attention is focused on the fact that prosodic organization of an anecdote is the most significant means for correlating the two-dimensional semantics of its text against the background of other lingual means.

An anecdote (pronounced an-ik-doh) is a very short story that is significant to the topic at hand; usually adding personal knowledge or experience to the topic. Basically, anecdotes are stories. Like many stories, anecdotes are most often told through speech; they are spoken rather than written down.

The term “anecdote” originally comes from the Greek phrase ἀνέκδοτα, meaning “things unpublished.

The examples for it: Picture a mother and a father discussing whether or not to get a dog for the family. The father says: You know, when I was a kid, my dog was my best friend. My childhood was better because of him. The mother contemplates his **story**—a.k.a. his **anecdote**—and then agrees that they should get a dog.

Sometimes anecdotes are funny or effective because they interrupt an important moment. Imagine a big wedding dinner on a TV sitcom. The best man is giving a speech, when suddenly another guest, clearly drunk, stands up and yells:

That reminds me of a wild party I went to with the groom, before he got that new ball and chain! If you had told me back then that he would choose just ONE woman, I never would have believed it!

The audience laughs at his drunken anecdote, while the bride looks at the groom in anger. Here, the anecdote brings both humor and tension to the moment.

Anecdotes can be as simple as a relative joke. Picture a group of friends discussing their Halloween costumes for this year. One friend says: I was an owl last year—it was a real hoot! Her friends groan and giggle. Here, the anecdote is told just to bring laughter.

Anecdotes can be presented in an endless number of forms. Below are several typical types of anecdotes.

a. **Humorous:** An anecdote that adds humor to the topic at hand. For example, two friends are arguing about driving directions. The driver tells the passenger to turn off the GPS, insisting that he knows the way. The passenger replies, “oh, like the time we turned it off and ended up out in the middle of that cow farm?!” We then see a flashback of their car surrounded by loudly mooing cows.

b. **Reminiscent:** A story that remembers something general about the past or a specific event, expressed in ways such as “that reminds me of...”, “when I used to...”, “I remember when...”, and so on. For example, a child asks her grandmother for \$2 to buy candy at the store, and the grandmother says, “you know back in my day, all you needed was a penny to go to the candy shop! My grandmother would give me a nickel and I’d be a happy clam!”

c. **Philosophical:** An anecdote expressed in order to make others think more deeply about the topic at hand. For example, a group of college students are discussing the morality of lying; most are arguing that it is never okay to lie. One student offers an anecdote to the others: “what about families who lied to German soldiers, you know, about hiding Jews in their homes during World War II? Do the lives saved justify the lies they told?” The students then contemplate the validity of their prior arguments.

d. **Inspirational:** An anecdote that is told in order to inspire hope or other positive emotions. They are often about not giving up, achieving goals or dreams, making the impossible possible, and so on. For example, a doctor talking to a group of war amputees tells them about a soldier who came in with no hands and no hope—but left the hospital holding his newborn baby in his prosthetic hands.

e. **Cautionary:** Stories that warn others about the dangers or negative consequences surrounding the topic at hand. For example, a speaker is giving a talk to teenagers about the risks of using drugs. During his presentation, he reminds them of a well-known straight-A student who died of a heroin overdose a few years before; warning them that it could happen to anyone. Anecdotes, like other forms of stories, are common and highly effective devices found throughout literature, film, television, theater, and even real life. Anecdotes make conversations or dialogue more personal and interesting. Usually, they are employed in a way that will make the audience and/or other characters laugh or think more deeply about a topic.

A very famous anecdote in literature is from Swann’s Way of Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time* novels, when he recalls a specific time that he ate a madeleine cookie. Below is a small selection from this memory: Many years had elapsed during which nothing of Combray, save what was comprised in the theatre and the drama of my going to bed there, had any existence for me, when one day in winter, as I came home, my mother, seeing that I was cold, offered me some tea, a thing I did not ordinarily take. I declined at first, and then, for no

particular reason, changed my mind. She sent out for one of those short, plump little cakes called ‘petites madeleines,’ which look as though they had been moulded in the fluted scallop of a pilgrim’s shell. Proust uses this anecdote in part of an ongoing discussion on memory and remembrance of the past. For him, this particular childhood moment represents one of his strongest and most intense memories, particularly of those tied to senses. In Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Albus Dumbledore is having a conversation with a visiting headmaster about the knowledge they have of their own castles. Dumbledore then says: Oh, I would never dream of assuming I know all Hogwarts’ secrets, Igor. Only this morning, for instance, I took a wrong turn on the way to the bathroom and found myself in a beautifully proportioned room I had never seen before, containing a really rather magnificent collection of chamber pots. When I went back to investigate more closely, I discovered that the room had vanished. Dumbledore’s brief story is related to their conversation; it gives a personal example to support his view on the topic, and provides something for Igor to ponder. Furthermore, the anecdote makes Dumbledore appear humble against his visitor’s prideful attitude.

Anecdotes don’t always have to be personal; some are just interesting stories about specific people or subjects. The Book of Three Hundred Anecdotes, for instance, includes 300 brief stories about topics from affection to librarians to war. The following anecdote is from the topic “Forgiveness”:

Mariè Antoinette.—On the elevation of this princess to the throne after the death of Louis XV., an officer of the body-guard, who had given her offence on some former occasion, expressed his intention of resigning his commission; but the queen forbade him. “Remain,” said she, “forget the past as I forgive it.”

Each of the anecdotes provides a brief account of something related to its adjacent topic. The book is filled with similar stories referencing historical figures, places, books, ideas, etc for each topic included; providing anecdotes for any and all conversations.

In conclusion, anecdotes are valuable literary devices because of their diversity in style, tone, and utility—they can be used by almost any person, in any situation, in any genre. Like any story shared with others, anecdotes serve countless purposes and make situations more interesting for both the characters and the audience. An anecdote is a timeless device that is used across literature, film, television and theater, and has been benefiting storytellers for centuries.

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